

Congress of the United States
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Small Business
2561 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-6515

August 5, 2025

The Honorable Kelly Loeffler
Administrator
U.S. Small Business Administration
409 3rd Street, SW
Washington, DC 20416

Dear Administrator Loeffler,

I write again to express serious concerns and request information regarding the Small Business Administration's (SBA) facilitation of expedited access to agency data for individuals associated with the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), particularly in light of recent reports about the agency's vetting process.

In testimony before the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship in May, you stated that DOGE operatives "have not had access" to personal or sensitive small business information. However, email communications reviewed by *Wired* show that on February 3, 2025, senior SBA staff urgently requested broad access for DOGE operatives to both SBA and National Finance Center (NFC) information systems.¹ "Admin access" was reportedly granted within hours to systems containing highly sensitive information—such as Social Security and Employer Identification numbers—of SBA staff and of the millions of small business owners, homeowners, and renters who have used SBA lending programs, including disaster assistance loans.²

These reports present a troubling account of SBA's disregard for basic controls on sensitive data as it expedited access for DOGE operatives. The speed with which SBA granted access makes clear that it failed to protect personal information by bypassing the standard screening and security clearance processes required of government employees who handle sensitive information.³

Even more troubling are reports that one DOGE operative had been fired from an internship at a network monitoring firm after being suspected of leaking internal information, raising serious doubts about his fitness to manage sensitive data.⁴ However, in testimony before the Small

¹ Victoria Elliott, *How Edward 'Big Balls' Coristine and DOGE Got Access to a Federal Payroll System That Serves the FBI*, *Wired* (July 30, 2025), <https://www.wired.com/story/edward-coristine-big-balls-doge-federal-pay-roll-system/>.

² *Id.*

³ *Id.*

⁴ *Id.*

Business Committee in June, you said the operative “is an SBA employee who has been vetted, as has the entire team.” Given these discrepancies between your testimony before the Senate and House Small Business Committee, and the reporting by *Wired*, I have serious concerns about the omission of critical information to Congress.

As you know, government protocols regarding requests for access to information and systems typically only allow the lowest level of access required to meet the specific objective in order to protect sensitive data.⁵ The emails cited in reports did not explain the intended objective, limit access to the lowest level required, or comply with federal laws, including the Federal Privacy Act and the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA).⁶

Given the egregious lack of transparency and reports of SBA’s flagrant disregard for security protocols, I, along with my colleagues on the Committee, sent two separate letters sent on February 3, 2025, and February 12, 2025 requesting detailed information on DOGE’s accessing of SBA’s systems. The SBA’s lack of a satisfactory response is obstructing the Committee’s investigation and raises serious concerns regarding the SBA’s efforts to comply with legitimate oversight requests. Pursuant to Rule X of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Small Business has broad authority to investigate “problems of all types of small business.” The Committee possesses jurisdiction over “assistance to and protection of small businesses.”

I therefore request a detailed and thorough response to the following inquiries as soon as possible, but no later than August 22, 2025:

1. Responses to our inquiries included in correspondence dated February 3, 2025. For your convenience the questions that are awaiting a response are below.
 - 1) Are the reports accurate that Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) operatives have access to SBA’s systems? If so:
 - a. What are the names of the specific systems?
 - b. Who has asked to gain access to the systems and for what purpose?
 - c. Who granted access?
 - d. Have any of these requests been approved? Are any still under consideration?
 - e. What information was obtained and what is it being used for?
 - f. Was there any breach of personal information?
 - 2) The Executive Order directs each agency head to establish a DOGE team of at least four employees within each agency. Please provide a comprehensive list of all DOGE employees at SBA, as well as a specific list of every individual who has been granted access to the system since President Trump’s inauguration.
 - a. Did they have appropriate clearances to protect sensitive information?

⁵ National Institute of Standards and Technology (2020) Security and Privacy Controls for Information Systems and Organizations. (Department of Commerce, Washington, D.C.), Special Publications (SP) 800-53 Rev. 5, September 23, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.6028/NIST.SP.800-53r5>

⁶ Elliott, *supra* note 1.

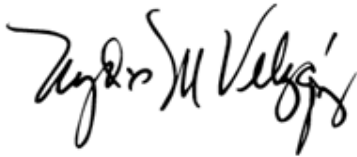
- b. Please provide detailed information on how DOGE individuals complied with Ethics in Government Act, which include specific financial disclosure and conflict of interest safeguards.
 - c. What specific access has been granted, and what was the rationale for doing so? Can you confirm that no individual outside the SBA has been granted access to the systems since President Trump's inauguration?
- 3) What safeguards are in place to ensure access to these systems are not abused?
 - a. What safeguards are in place to protect Americans' personal and private data?
 - b. What safeguards are in place to protect the integrity of the programs and ensure that no authorized service or payment is delayed or canceled?
 - c. Please detail the extent to which you complied with the Privacy Act of 1974, which prescribes how federal agency records are stored, accessed, used, and disclosed?
- 4) The EO Establishing and Implementing the President's Department of Government Efficiency reorganizes the U.S. Digital Service, to be led by an Administrator within DOGE who reports to the White House Chief of Staff. Please provide specific information as to who is the administrator at DOGE, and please list all of the vetting of the appointment that has taken place.
- 5) What procedures are in place for controlling and providing access to the system, and were these procedures followed in this case?
- 6) Were any SBA employees threatened with administrative leave or otherwise in order for access to be granted?
- 7) Did President Trump, Elon Musk, or anyone at the White House suggest making any threats to fire or place anyone on leave that objected to grant the access? If yes, who suggested it and when did they suggest it?
- 8) Has the SBA threatened to remove or put any other career civil servants at the Small Business Administration on administrative leave following President Trump's inauguration? Has anyone else in those offices left the Department since then?
- 9) Were additional unsecured servers set up after access was granted to the SBA's systems? If so:
 - a. What purpose do they serve and why were they necessary?
 - b. Please provide a list of anyone with access to these servers?
 - c. Have these servers undergone a Privacy Impact Assessment? If so, please provide detailed information.
- 10) Please provide the legal authority under which the SBA granted access to systems to anyone associated with Elon Musk or DOGE.

- 11) Copies of all communications between associates of Elon Musk or DOGE and the SBA related to accessing SBA's systems.
2. Responses to our inquiries included in correspondence dated February 12, 2025. For your convenience the questions that are awaiting a response are below.
 - 1) Does the SBA have possession of a memorandum of understanding between SBA and DOGE or any document detailing its planned actions under the Executive Order Establishing and Implementing the President's "Department of Government Efficiency," as required by the E.O.14158. Please transmit such documents to the Committee.
 - 2) How are conflicts of interest being vetted and reported regarding any individual being given access to SBA's data?
 - 3) Going forward, what steps will the SBA take to ensure the protection of small business data?
 - 4) Will you pledge to work with and immediately notify the Committee of further interactions and work with DOGE efforts?
 3. Responses to inquiries related to the recent reporting:
 - 1) Who authorized the expedited access to internal SBA systems? Were the White House, Office of Personnel and Management, and Office of Management and Budget aware of this expedited request?
 - 2) Has DOGE centralized the information obtained from SBA and other federal agencies? If so, where is this data stored? What is the intent behind centralizing Americans' data?
 - 3) What steps did SBA take to authenticate, vet, or supervise DOGE staffers, and on what date did the SBA complete these steps? Were background checks or government credentials verified? If so, what level of clearance did Edward Coristine, Donald Park, and other DOGE staff hold?
 - 4) Did SBA conduct a risk assessment or internal security review before or after granting access?
 - 5) Has SBA conducted a forensic audit to determine what information was viewed, downloaded, or altered?

- 6) Were any Members of Congress, Committees, or Office of Inspector General informed about this access prior to being granted?
- 7) What data privacy and protection trainings are SBA employees required to undergo? Did DOGE staffers at SBA undergo the same training?
- 8) Has SBA notified individuals or loan recipients whose information may have been accessed?
- 9) With comprehensive access to sensitive SBA data on loans and contracts for over five months, have these DOGE staff identified any instances of loans or contracts that did not adhere to program standards that were current at the time the loan or contract was approved? If so, please provide documentation of any findings to the Committee.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please contact the Committee's minority staff at 202-225-4038.

Sincerely,



Nydia M. Velázquez
Ranking Member
House Small Business Committee